PENDING CLAIMS

Claims 1-4 (Cancelled).

5. (Previously Presented) A method for storing sets of signals in a compressed format comprising, sequentially:

transferring a plurality of sets of signals previously recorded in an uncompressed format and stored in a first memory device in an uncompressed format to a second memory device where the sets of signals are stored in an uncompressed format;

retrieving one set of signals in an uncompressed format at a time from the second memory device and compressing each set of signals that has been transferred to the second memory device in an uncompressed format into a set of signals in a compressed format, one set of signals at a time, in the second memory device;

storing each set of signals compressed into a compressed format in the second memory device or in another memory device; and

making available, for future storage, memory space in the second memory device occupied by a set of signals in uncompressed format, after compressing that set of signals into a compressed format.

Claims 6 and 7 (Cancelled).

8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 5 wherein storing in the second memory in an uncompressed format the sets of signals transferred to the second memory device in an uncompressed format and the storing of each set of signals in a compressed format comprise storing respective sets of signals in an uncompressed format and in a compressed format in different parts of the second memory device.

9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 8 wherein storing in the second memory in an uncompressed format the sets of signals transferred to the second memory device in an uncompressed format and the storing each set of signals in a compressed format comprise storing the respective sets of signals in an uncompressed format and in a compressed format in a computer readable disc.

10. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 5 wherein storing in the second memory in an uncompressed format the sets of signals transferred to the second memory device in an uncompressed format and the storing each set of signals in a compressed format comprise storing the respective sets of signals in an uncompressed format and in a compressed format in different memory devices.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 5 wherein

storing in the second memory in an uncompressed format the sets of signals transferred to the second memory device in an uncompressed format comprises storing each set of signals in an uncompressed format in a computer readable electronic memory, and

the storing each set of signals in a compressed format comprises storing each set of signals in a compressed format in a computer readable hard disc.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 5 wherein the compressing comprises compressing the sets of signals to MP3 format.

13. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12 wherein the sets of signals represent audio.

14. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 5 wherein the sets of signals represent segments of audio.

Claims 15 and 16 (Cancelled).

17. (Previously Presented) A method for storing sets of previously recorded digital signals in a compressed format in a computer readable disc storage device, each set representing a segment of audio, the method comprising, sequentially:

transferring one a plurality of sets of digital signals previously recorded in an uncompressed format from a first storage device to a second storage device where the sets of digital signals are stored in an uncompressed format;

retrieving each set of digital signals in an uncompressed format, only one set of digital signals in an uncompressed format at a time, from the second storage device;

compressing the set of digital signals in an uncompressed format that is retrieved, into a set of digital signals in a compressed format, one set of digital signals in a compressed format at a time;

storing the set of digital signals compressed into a compressed format in the second storage device; and

making available, for future storage, space in the second storage device in which the set of digital signals in an uncompressed format was stored, after that set of digital signals has been compressed into a compressed format.

Claim 18 (Cancelled).

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17 wherein the compressing comprises compressing the set of digital signals to MP3 format.

Claims 20 and 21(Cancelled).

22. (Previously Presented) A method for storing previously recorded sets of audio tracks in a compressed format in at least one memory device and for later retrieving the set of audio tracks in a compressed format, and for converting the set of

audio tracks retrieved in a compressed format into a set of signals in an uncompressed format suitable to be played to sound the respective audio-tracks, the method comprising:

transferring a plurality of sets of audio tracks in an uncompressed format from a first storage device to a second storage device, without compression, and storing the set of audio tracks in an uncompressed format in the second storage device;

compressing the set of audio tracks transferred to and stored in the second storage device in an uncompressed format into a compressed format, in the second storage device;

storing the set of audio tracks in a compressed format in the second storage device; and

upon receiving a request for an audio track to be played, retrieving the set of audio tracks in the compressed format and decompressing the set of audio tracks retrieved into signals in an uncompressed format suitable to be played to sound the audio track, wherein the compressing and the decompressing are performed according to a predetermined priority including only compressing the set of audio tracks when there is no pending request for an audio track to be played, and not compressing and decompressing simultaneously.

Claim 23 (Cancelled).

24. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 22 comprising retrieving respective sets of audio tracks in a compressed format only after the respective set of audio tracks in an uncompressed format has been completely transferred to the second storage device, wherein the compressing comprises compressing each set of audio tracks in an uncompressed format that is retrieved.

Claim 25 (Cancelled).

26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 22 wherein the compressing comprises compressing the set of audio tracks to MP3 format.

27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24 wherein

the transferring sets of audio tracks in an uncompressed format comprises storing more than one set of audio tracks in an uncompressed format in the second storage device, and

the retrieving sets of audio tracks in an uncompressed format and the compressing each set of audio tracks in an uncompressed format that is retrieved comprises retrieving one set of audio tracks in an uncompressed format at a time and compressing one set of audio tracks into an uncompressed format at a time.

28. (Previously Presented) A system for receiving sets of signals in an uncompressed format stored on a removable storage device, converting the sets of signals in an uncompressed format to sets of digital signals in a compressed format, and storing the sets of digital signals in a compressed format in at least one memory device, each respective set of signals in an uncompressed format and each set of digital signals in a compressed format representing a respective audio segment, the system comprising:

an input for connecting or reading a removable storage device and through which signals read from the removable storage device are received;

a processor coupled to a memory device and the input, the processor being programmed to:

store in the memory device a set of signals in an uncompressed format supplied to the processor through the input,

retrieve from the memory device a set of signals in an uncompressed format from the memory device,

convert the set of signals in an uncompressed format that is retrieved into a set of digital signals in a compressed format,

store the set of digital signals in a compressed format in the memory
device,

make available, for future storage, memory space in the memory device
in which the set of signals in an uncompressed format were stored, after that set of
signals in an uncompressed format has been converted to the set of digital signals in a
compressed format, and

retrieve a set of digital signals in a compressed format from the memory
device and convert the set of digital signals in a compressed format that is retrieved
into an uncompressed format suitable to be played to sound a corresponding audio
segment, wherein the processor gives priority to converting a set of digital signals in a
compressed format and retrieved from the memory device into a set of signals in an
uncompressed format over converting a set of signals in an uncompressed format
retrieved from the memory device into a set of signals in a compressed format.

Claims 29-31 (Cancelled).

32. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 28 wherein the processor
comprises a programmed digital signal processor.

33. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 28 wherein the processor
comprises a programmed digital signal processor and a programmed controller.

34. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 28 wherein
the memory device comprises a computer readable disk, and
the processor is programmed to store sets of signals in an uncompressed format
and sets of digital signals in a compressed format on the disk.

Claims 35-60 (Cancelled).

61. (Currently Amended) A method of archiving of audio signals comprising:

under control of a processor, transferring to a memory device, from a removable storage device coupled to an input of the processor, a set of audio signals representing an audio segment, without conversion of the set of audio signals to a compressed format; and

only when the processor is not controlling accessing of an audio segment stored in the memory device, retrieving a set of the audio signals transferred to the memory device without conversion to a compressed format, converting the set of audio signals retrieved into a compressed format set, and storing the compressed format set in the memory device.

62. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 61 wherein converting the audio signals retrieved comprises converting at a rate in a range of from one to two times real time.

63. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 62 wherein the processor comprises a digital signal processor.

64. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 61 comprising erasing from the memory device the set of audio signals transferred to memory device without conversion to a compressed format, after conversion to the compressed format set, and storing the compressed format set in the memory device.